

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed September 25, 2001, requiring an election of the invention to be examined, reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in light of the following election, remarks and amendments.

Upon entering the foregoing amendments to the claims, claims 1-22 and 62-63 will be pending in the present application. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current preliminary amendment. The attached page is captioned "**Version with markings to show changes made.**" Furthermore, the claims as pending in Group I are set forth in the Appendix for the Examiner's convenience.

Amendments to the Specification

The entry of the amendments to the specification delineated above are respectfully requested. No new matter has been added with the foregoing amendments. The nature of the amendments to the specification are primarily grammatical. Further amendments to the specification include corrections to the specification to allow for consistent cross references between the drawings and their descriptions, such as the addition of reference numbers.

Amendments to the Claims

Applicants have amended claims 19 and 21 for grammatical reasons. The entry of the amendments to the claims is respectfully requested.

New Claims

New dependent claims 62-63 have been added to better articulate and thus provide a suitable level of protection for the present claimed invention. Entry of new claims 62-63 is respectfully requested. Claims 62-63 read on Group I of the present invention. Support for the new claims can be found in, for example, pages 15 through 21 of the present application.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1 19. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising a remote plasma
2 system having a RF generator connected to each processing region.[.]

1 21. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the oxidation chamber [and] is
2 connected to a remote plasma system having a RF generator or a microwave generator.

1 The following new claims have been added:

1 62. (New) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the isolated processing region of
2 each of said processing chambers and an interior region of said high pressure deposition module are
3 isolatable from an exterior environment in which said apparatus is situated.

1 63. (New) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the isolated processing region of
2 each of said processing chambers and an interior region of said high pressure deposition module are
3 isolatable from an exterior environment in which said apparatus is situated.

Appendix
Pending Claims in Group I

1. An apparatus for processing substrates, comprising:
 - (a) one or more transfer chambers;
 - (b) a substrate handling member disposed in each of the one or more transfer chambers;
 - (c) one or more processing chambers, each processing chamber defining at least one isolated processing region therein, wherein each processing region is connected to the one or more transfer chambers;
 - (d) one or more loadlock chambers in communication with the one or more transfer chambers; and
 - (e) one or more multi-slot substrate pre-heating modules in communication with the one or more transfer chambers.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising one or more multi-slot cooling stations disposed within the loadlock chamber.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a vacuum pump in fluid communication with the loadlock chamber.
4. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a vacuum pump in fluid communication with each processing region in the one or more processing chambers.
5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each processing chamber has two isolated processing regions.
6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each processing region includes a gas distribution assembly disposed therein and each gas distribution assembly shares process gases from one or more gas sources.
7. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a remote plasma system having an RF generator connected to each processing region.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein a remote plasma system is in fluid communication with each processing region.

9. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a high pressure deposition module connected to the one or more load lock chambers.

10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the high pressure deposition module is a spin-on dielectric module comprising one or more substrate stripping chambers.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the one or more multi-slot pre-heating modules are disposed within the loadlock chamber.

12. An apparatus for processing substrates, comprising:

- (a) a high pressure deposition module;
- (b) a first transfer chamber in communication with the high pressure deposition module;
- (c) a loadlock chamber in communication with the first transfer chamber;
- (d) a second transfer chamber in communication with the loadlock chamber;
- (e) a multi-slot substrate pre-heating module in communication with the first transfer chamber;
- (f) a substrate handling member disposed in the second transfer chamber; and
- (g) one or more processing chambers, each processing chamber defining at least one isolated processing region therein, wherein each processing region is connected to the second transfer chamber.

13. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the high pressure deposition module comprises:

- (a) one or more substrate spinner chambers;
- (b) one or more substrate curing chambers;
- (c) one or more substrate stripping chambers;
- (d) one or more silylation deposition chambers; and
- (e) a second substrate handling member disposed in the high pressure deposition module.

14. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising one or more multi-slot cooling stations disposed within each of the one or more loadlock chambers.

15. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising a vacuum pump in fluid communication with the one or more loadlock chambers.

16. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising a vacuum pump in fluid communication with each processing region.

17. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein each processing chamber has two isolated processing regions.

18. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein each processing region includes a gas distribution assembly disposed therein and each gas distribution assembly shares process gases from one or more gas sources.

19. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising a remote plasma system having a RF generator connected to each processing region.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein each substrate stripping chamber is an oxidation chamber.

21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the oxidation chamber is connected to a remote plasma system having a RF generator or a microwave generator.

22. The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the multi-slot pre-heating module is disposed within the loadlock chamber.

62. (New) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the isolated processing region of each of said processing chambers and an interior region of said high pressure deposition module are isolatable from an exterior environment in which said apparatus is situated.

63. (New) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the isolated processing region of each of said processing chambers and an interior region of said high pressure deposition module are isolatable from an exterior environment in which said apparatus is situated.

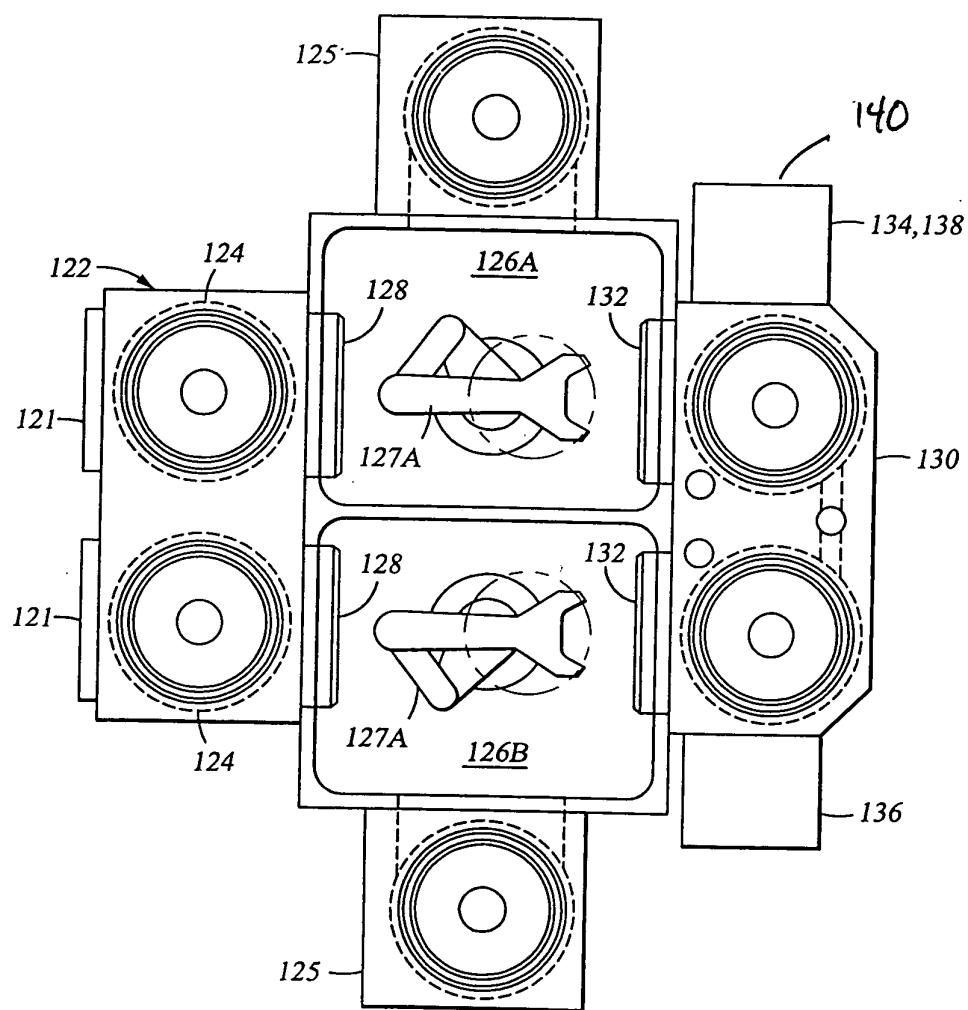


Fig. 2B

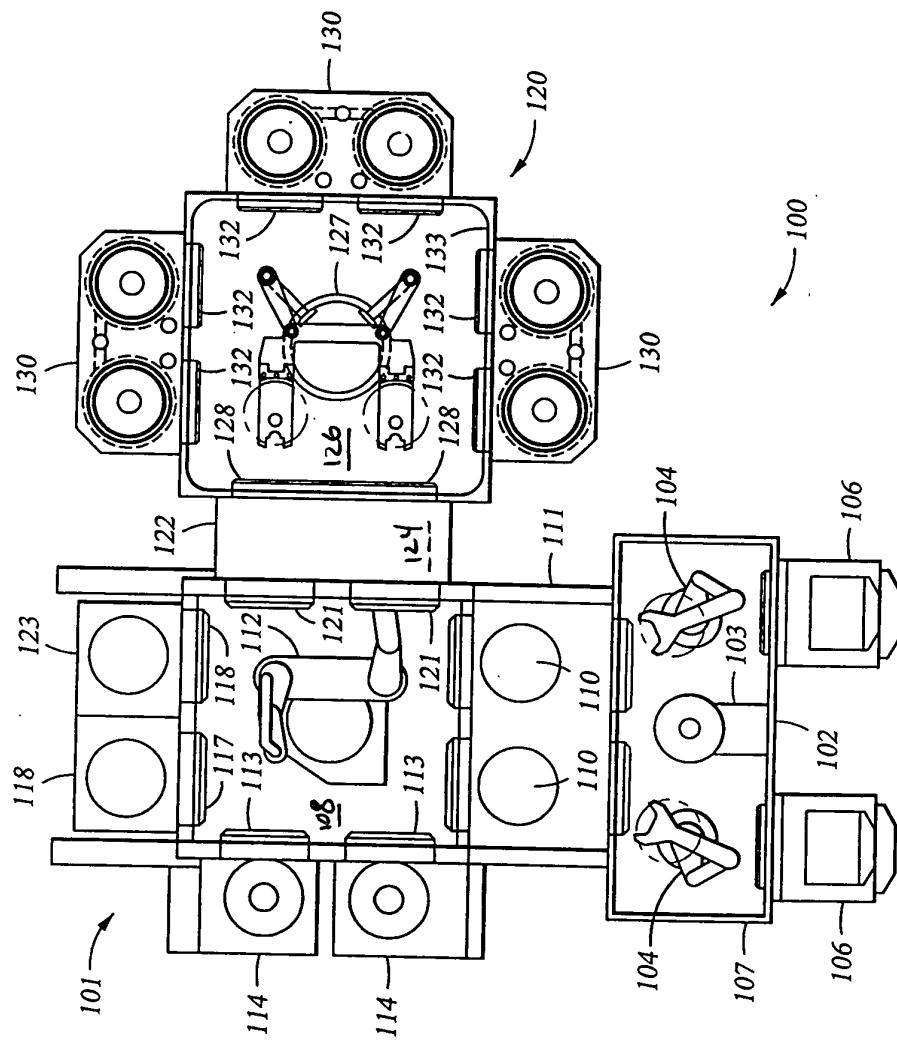


Fig. 3A

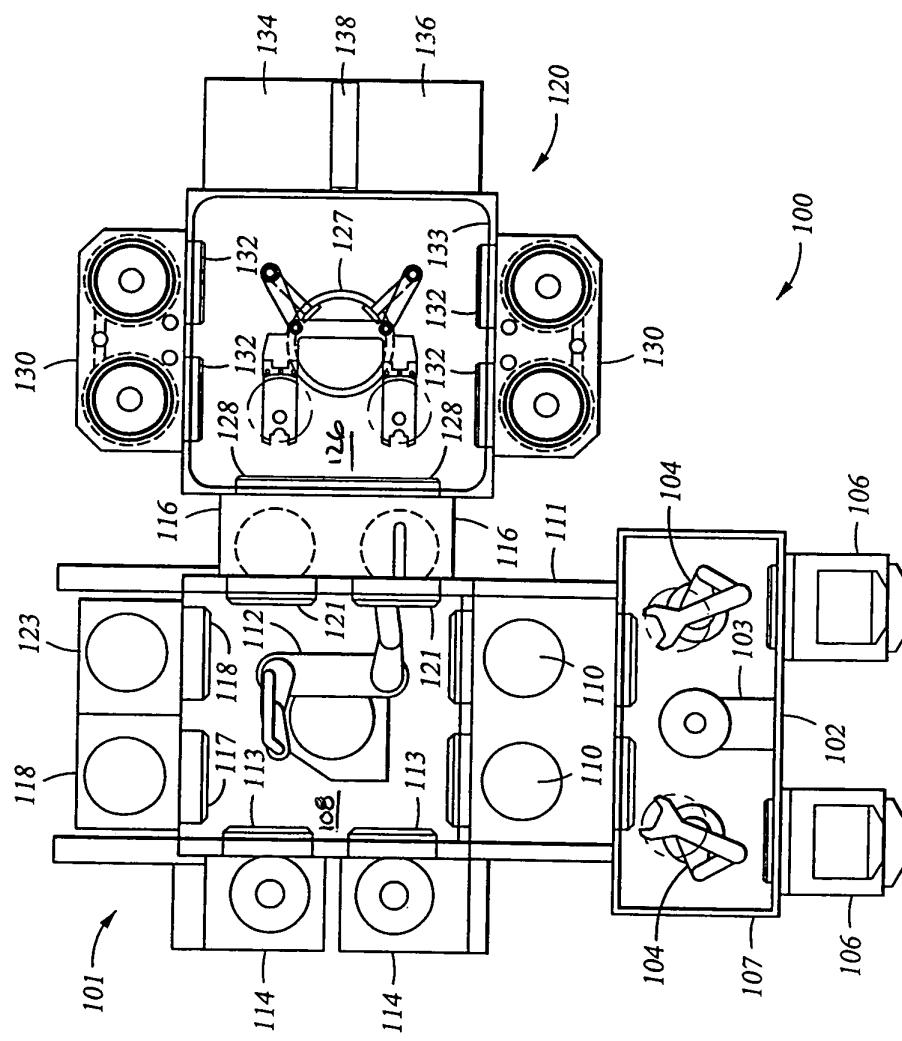


Fig. 3B

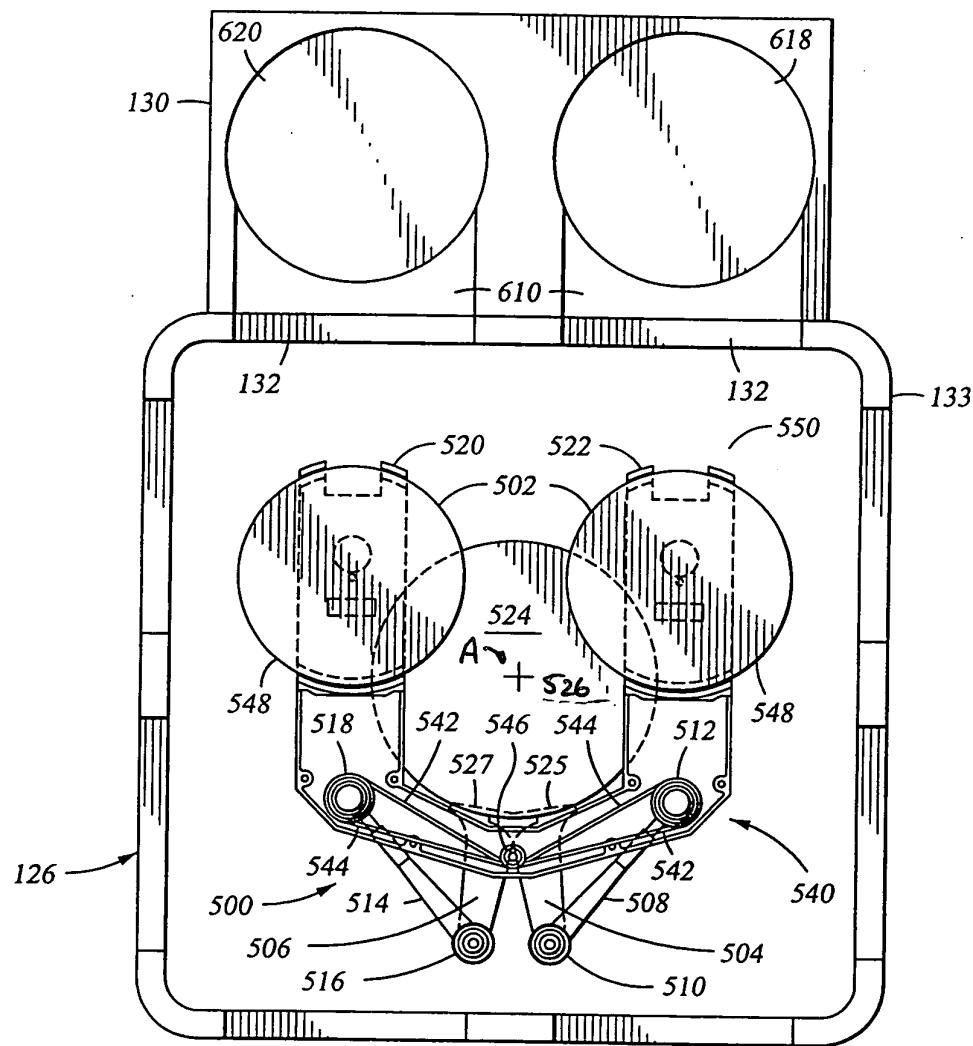


Fig. 5

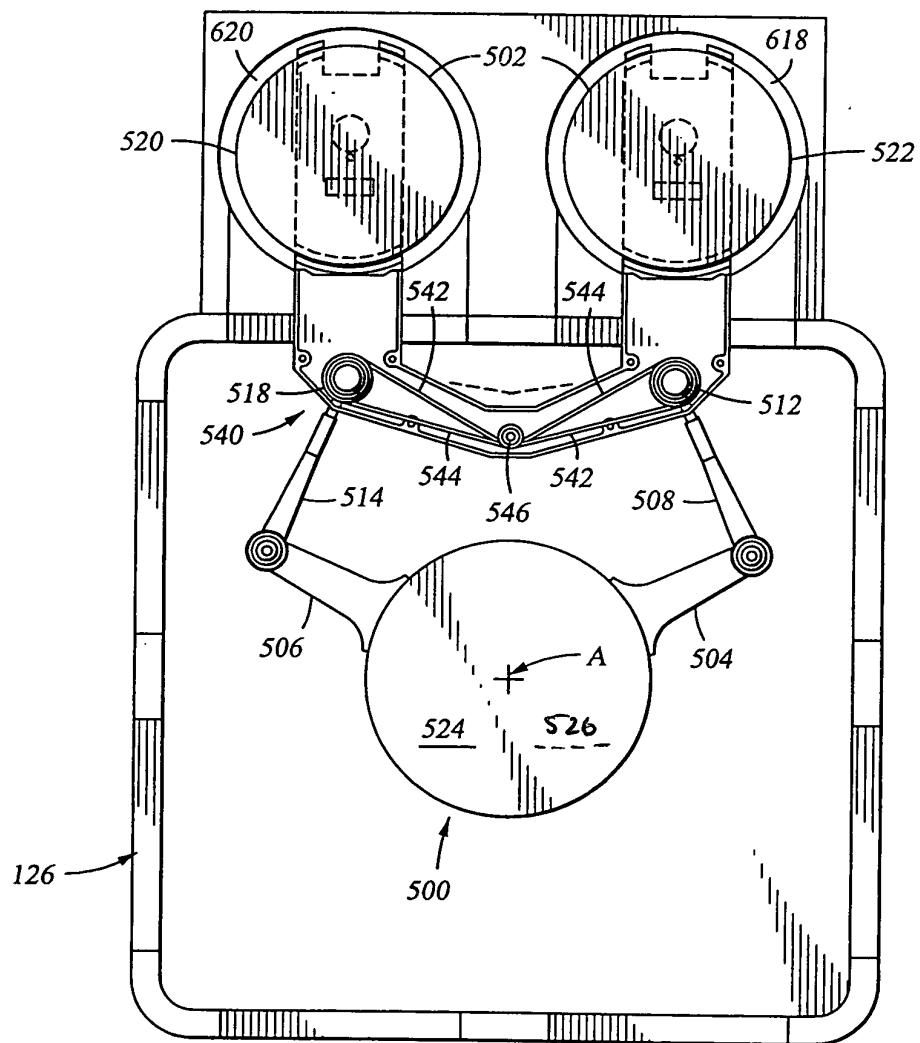


Fig. 6

9/17

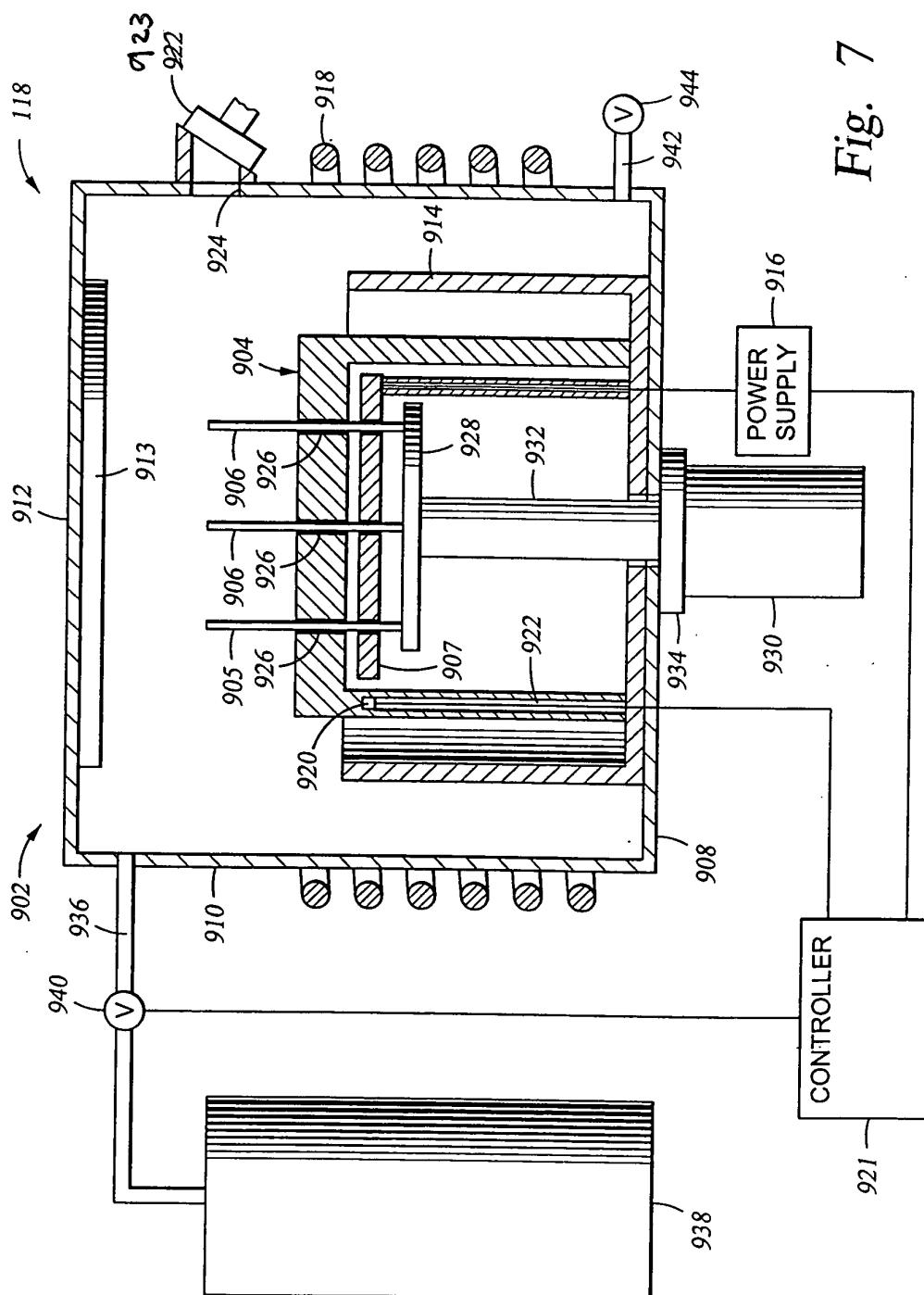


Fig. 7

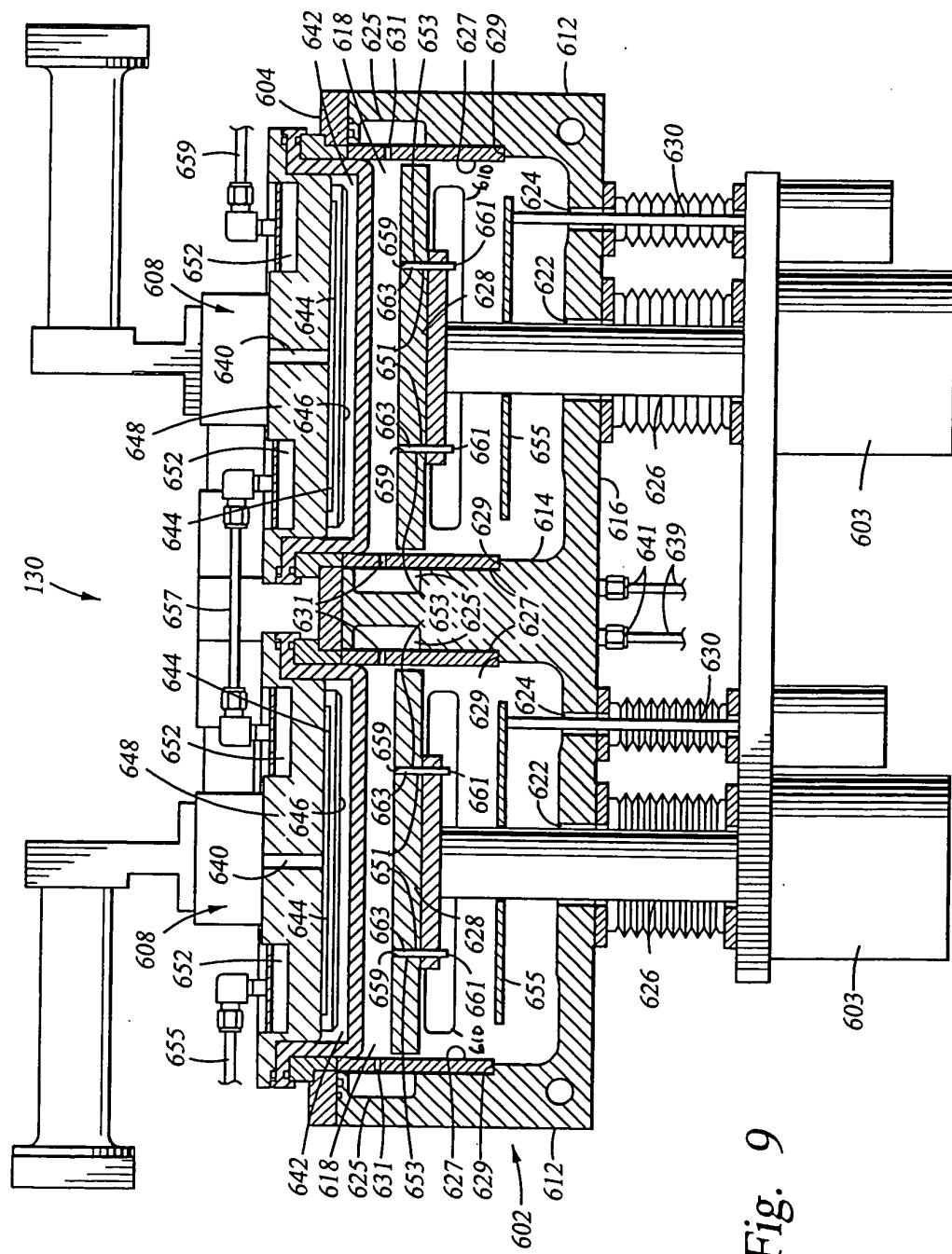


Fig. 9

Fig. 12

